

S. Hinuma et al  
U.S.S.N. 09/716,147  
Page 2

Amendments To The Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1-16. (Cancelled).

17. (Currently Amended) A screening method for a compound capable of changing the binding activity of a ligand polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 73, or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof, or a partial peptide of said ligand polypeptide, or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof, with a receptor protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:21, ~~SEQ ID NO: 22, or SEQ ID NO:22,~~ or a salt thereof, or a partial peptide of said receptor protein, or a salt thereof, the method comprising making a comparison of said binding activity between:

(i) at least one case where said ligand polypeptide, or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof, or a partial peptide of said ligand polypeptide, or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof is contacted with ~~a~~said receptor protein or a salt thereof or a partial peptide of said receptor protein, or a salt thereof, and

(ii) at least one case where said ligand polypeptide or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof, or a partial peptide of said ligand polypeptide, or its amide or ester, or a salt thereof together with a sample containing the compound to be tested is contacted with the receptor protein or a salt thereof or a partial peptide of said receptor protein or a salt thereof.

18-20. (Cancelled).